

Executive Summary

Companies and other organizations throughout the United States regularly report the interaction of their facilities with the environment to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to state, city, or county environmental agencies. Examples of the types of reports include air emissions, waste water discharge, and hazardous waste transportation and disposal. This reporting is called *compliance reporting*, and companies typically perform it by collecting data and annually completing and submitting paper forms. The characteristics of the reporting process vary by type of report and jurisdiction. The annual effort by all parties of collecting, organizing, analyzing, and displaying the data is significant, but is overshadowed by the administrative aspects of typing (frequently many times), mailing, sorting, filing, reproducing, and storing paper forms. The EPA uses the term *burden* to identify this collective effort.

The EPA has initiated a number of programs, including the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) and Reinventing Environmental Information (REI), to reduce the burden. One outcome of CSI was an audit of compliance reporting by metal finishers in Arizona and Texas conducted by a team of EPA, state and local government, and industry representatives. This Regulatory Information Inventory and Team Evaluation (RIITE) was completed in 1997. The team made several recommendations to improve compliance reporting and reduce burden. One recommendation was to establish a World Wide Web site that supports electronic rather than paper reporting, serves as a single point of submission, and serves as an access point to obtain environmental information. This concept is called *One-Stop*. The REI initiative contains a goal to eliminate paper submissions and reporting to the EPA; One-Stop directly contributes towards meeting that goal.

The EPA has been seeking candidate states to establish One-Stop sites. Arizona, through its participation in RIITE, relatively small size, and progress in developing an integrated environmental database, is an excellent candidate. As a result, the EPA tasked the Logistics Management Institute (LMI) to assist the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) develop a requirements document for a One-Stop site. The document will be used to help ADEQ plan the development and obtain project approval from ADEQ and Arizona state information technology managers.

LMI interviewed key ADEQ environmental and information systems staff members and made several recommendations regarding the functionality and technical approach in establishing an initial One-Stop site. The recommendations include the following:

- The number of supported forms at the initial site should be restricted to reduce the delay in fielding the site, minimize risk, and provide lessons for future expansion.
- The submission methodology should include both the World Wide Web and electronic data interchange to support both large and small users.
- The site should use the same or related software tools that ADEQ has already selected for its environmental database development.
- New databases that use the primary database system as a part of One-Stop should

replace the diverse existing microcomputer databases.

We assessed both the "as is" and "to be" environments from a functional basis. After completing a cost-benefit study, we estimate the technical approach we propose will achieve approximately \$1 million in savings over 5 years. These savings will increase dramatically as additional compliance reports are added to the site.